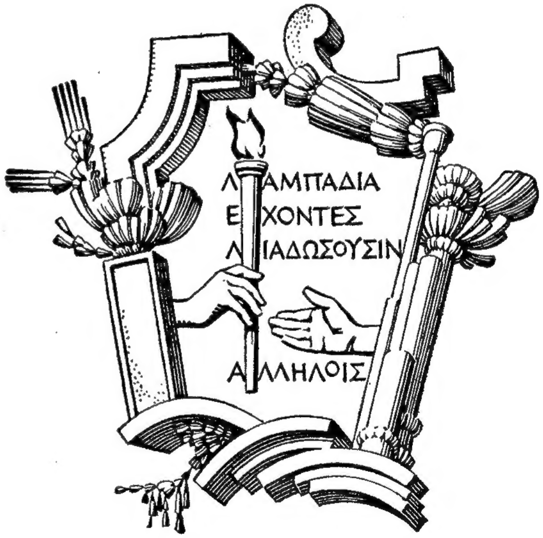
LAYOUT IN ADVERTISING

Layout

in ADVERTISING

W. A. DWIGGINS

REVISED EDITION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L-Z

TO
PAUL HOLLISTER

Preface

THIS book discusses the operation of putting an advertising project into graphic form. For the purposes of the argument "advertising" means every conceivable *printed* means for selling anything.

The subjects discussed are (1) the apparatus that the advertising designer works with—paper, type, pictures, lettering, ornament, and how these influence design; (2) the things that the layout operation helps to make—first in a brief catalog, and later at greater length in connection with the methods of design; and (3) the designing process itself.

The compiler has been allowed to work out his own method of exposition. He has worked by impression and allusion rather than by precept and example. He shows no specimens of advertisements actually existing; he manufactures his own. He avoids technical matters—makes a *macédoine* of his metaphors when the case demands—invokes the aid of slang.

A person who is inspired to read a text of this kind reads it because he hopes to find information therein. It will be courteous to specify, before he begins, what kind of information he may expect to find. What any given person knows about the graphic side of advertising is limited. There is no body of tested data relating to the subject. What any individual knows is what he has been able to extract from his own experience—a few rule-of-thumb deductions. The text, to be of service as a book of formulæ or recipes, would need to be a summary of many experiences of many people, a resolution of many scientifically tested cases into a standard technique. This book is not such a confluence or resolution. It is a statement of one person's opinions about ways to make printed advertising effective. Consequently, it cannot be expected to provide tested methods of procedure or to exhibit model arrangements. It offers a method for attacking the problem of advertising layout, not a solution of the problem.

The book assumes that the process of arranging an advertisement involves the use of paper, type, and printing plates in a particular way—a way that differs somewhat from traditional typographic design. A piece of printing *per se*, such as a book, is put together according to rules that regard the printed piece as an end in itself—as a product, an item of manufacture. The design of a piece of printed *advertising* involves a concern for good printing as such—but involves more than that. The advertising piece is not an end-product; it is an intermediate step in a process. The end-product of advertising design is not printing—it is *sales*. This difference between the layout of printing and the layout of advertising printing is radical. The design of printing as printing, for example, may indulge itself in the exercise of Fine Art to its heart's content. But the Art that goes into advertising cannot afford to be thus disinterested. It has to keep one eye fixed upon the business in hand. In this text the essentials of good printing practice are touched upon, but they are not developed *in extenso*. They are dealt with fully in other books and in the discussions in the technical journals. The emphasis in this instance is upon the essentials of good advertising printing practice.

The *approach* to a specific problem in advertising layout is as important as the designing operation itself—it is, in fact, an essential part of the operation. The people to be addressed and their peculiarities—the particular sonority of the text—what will happen when the piece is first seen, or first touched, or first opened—the process of design begins with consideration of a variety of such points far in advance of any manipulation of type and paper. The book tries to exhibit the method of this preliminary study, and to show how these preliminary concerns shape the graphic design of an advertisement.

The practitioner in any art is obliged to build up his own equipment of standards and to evolve and perfect his own technique. He cannot lift a method of procedure, ready made, out of a handbook. There is a passage in Walton's preface to his *Angler* that applies: "Now for the art of *catching* fish, that is to say, how to make a man—that was none—to be an angler by a book; he that undertakes it shall undertake a harder task than *Mr. Hales* (a most valiant and excellent fencer) who, in a printed book called *A Private School of Defence*, undertook to teach that art or science, and was laughed at for his labour. Not but that many useful things might be learnt by that book, but he was laughed at because that art was not to be taught by words, but by practice; and so must angling."

Armed with that foreknowledge, the writer has not assumed to give directions. He has aimed, rather, to help the practitioner compile his own book of directions. The help that the text may be expected to provide, then, will be along lines of evocation—or *education* in the root meaning of the word—drawing out of the receptacle what was already there. If it succeeds in enlightening the student of graphic advertising as to methods of attack and analysis it will have done one good thing. If it then inspires him to build up his own structure of judgments and standards, based upon the exercise of his own faculty of criticism, it will have accomplished its aim. 1928

In the second paragraph of this Preface three subjects are marked down for discussion: (1) Apparatus, (2) Product, (3) Process of Design.

The passage of time indicated by two dates—1928 above, and the year 1948 subjoined—has had no effect upon Items (2) and (3). But the compass-bearings of Item (1) have shifted. There have been changes in printing processes: fast-printing gravure, lithography-offset merger, "light"-composed letterpress. But the most important shift of position in Item (1) results from a change in "mental climate." *Words* have lost their meaning. There is, now, much less use of words to convince people of the need of spending their money, and much more use of emotional persuasion, *via* "atmosphere," overtone, mood, induced by surrealist graphic devices and "abstract" gestures. *Words*, in current practice, serve mostly as spots of texture in a pattern. What they *say* is of much less importance than how much their strange looks and behavior startle you.

The "climate" shift is accompanied by a change in printing-type style—by the substitution of strange and obscure letter shapes for the earlier, legible "classics." So the designer of advertising is constrained to dismiss the problem of arranging "copy" in schemes that mean something, and to confine his effort to the construction of graphic devices that explode in front of the eyes and capture a beholder's attention *vi et armis*. 1947

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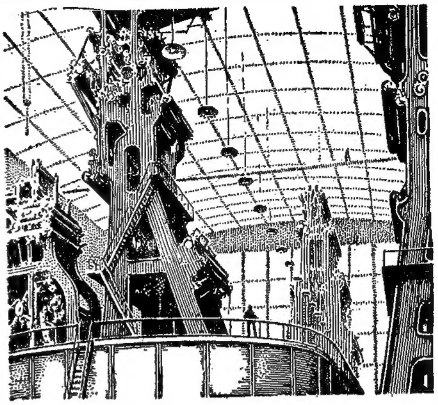
PART 1



Apparatus

THE SUCCESS of any process of design depends upon a sympathetic attitude on the part of the designer towards the material he undertakes to shape. The material, when its conditions are understood and met, itself meets the designer halfway. It performs a part of the designing process of its own accord—suggests modifications, points out ways to turn. But if its peculiarities are ignored or opposed it retaliates by canceling out all the good features that the designer may initiate.

The process of design under consideration here is the design of advertising. The materials to be met sympathetically and understood are the materials of printing —type, printing plates, paper. A discussion of the processes of graphic advertising, if it starts at the ground, will begin by examining the qualities of these materials. This does not mean that all the technicalities of manufacture need to be deployed—how paper is made; why type bodies have nicks on their sides. It means that the designer of printed advertising, to make his way sure, will seek to familiarize himself with the textures, appearances, and adaptabilities of paper, and with the characteristic shapes of printing types. By so doing he will establish himself firmly in the practice of thinking out his designs in terms of materials, and not in terms of lines neatly ruled with a T-square on a drawing-board.

This first section of the text, then—to help found the practitioner in the above meritorious practice, and to direct upon the general problem of advertising lay-out some faint preliminary beams of light—will make a list of the tools of the trade, and will try to find out what relation they bear to the art and practice of graphic advertising design.

PAPER

Such a list of the tools and materials that a designer of advertising uses may well begin with paper, because paper is the substance that underlies the whole of his product. He will print on woven fabrics once in a while, and upon tin, but paper is the natural first level of his structure. Paper means all sorts of things to the various people who come into contact with it—to the manufacturer, cellulose; to the dealer, blue packages; to the pressman, surface—consequently it will be expedient to find out at this point just what paper means to the designer of printing and particularly to the designer of advertising.

"A part of the picture"

In the first place paper does *not* mean to him the canvas upon which he paints—background. Paper occupies a much more important position in his scheme than that. If the figure of painting on canvas be employed, then he will speak of paper as one of the colors

with which he paints. Paper, for him, is an active participant, not a passive receiver of impressions. This difference of mental attitude—the difference between thinking about paper merely as a background upon which one draws or paints or prints, and thinking about it as an active element of design—is radical and important. It is a touchstone by which you can determine whether or not you are properly a printing designer. If you are in the habit of thinking about paper as "part of the picture" you may take it as demonstrated that the Intelligence behind the Scheme intended you to work out your nature in terms of printing.

Printers' paper has been made (up to this date) to fit the requirements of one particular kind of printing: printing from surfaces in relief. I say "up to this date" advisedly, because there are signs that printing is at the threshold of revolutionary changes—changes from a relief process to an intaglio or planographic process. When those changes take place, paper requirements (and workmanship values at large) will change with them—and it will be as futile, then, to cling to the skirts of the superseded methods and bewail their passing as it is now to mourn the departed glories of carpentry and coach-building. But the art and mystery of printing has not been changed yet. Therefore let us write specifications for an ideal paper as we would have it now. "We" are, of course, speaking in the person of a designer of advertising.

Specifications for an ideal paper

The designer's ideal paper will be opaque; so that his devices on one side of a page will not be disturbed by mutterings from the other side.

If it is white it will not be too white, and yet not definitely "india"; a "natural" color.

It will be flexible; so that the pages of his book will not need to be scored before they can be forced apart. It is pleasant for a book to open of its own accord, willingly and frankly. Morris or another said that to test the flexibility of a given size of page it should be help upright by its back edge: if it fell over of its own weight it was properly flexible.

The designer will ask that the paper be pleasantly soft to the fingers. The tactile quality of a page has more to do with a reader's "reaction" than is generally realized. A harsh, rasping surface sets up a nervous irritation in many people, and that can hardly be called a proper state of mind for the "reception of the message."

Texture? What you will. A matter of personal liking —plus the demands of the specific job. Antique; English finish; laid; wove; calendered; coated; plate. The artificial fabric finishes are perhaps not quite in keeping with the printing process. But the specific job settles all that. One will print on wood-veneer, or canvas, or tapa cloth, or on one of those remarkable Chinese agglomerations of bullrushes and twigs—if the job demands it.

Durability is not a point of great importance to the advertising man except in particular instances; such, for example, as the case of a price list or catalog that has to be used repeatedly. As a rule, printed advertising does its work quickly, and dies—like a May-fly. The designer is aware that as a usual thing he is modeling in snow. He is content to let his work perish when its time comes. The usual (and perfectly proper) route for a printed advertisement to take is across the desk, or under the reading lamp, into the waste-basket. How paper looks and how it feels is much more important to the advertiser than how many centuries it will last.

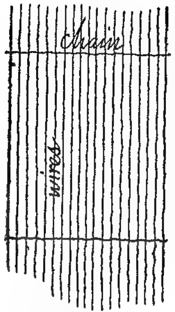
Newsprint

Newsprint stands at the bottom of the list as to quality. But its humble position by no means rules it out as a suitable concomitant of graphic design. There is an

adequate and suitable (yea, artistically suitable) way to handle newsprint and the kind of ink that has to go on it. To prepare himself for the manipulation of newsprint the designer properly forgets all he knows about the higher categories of the Printing Art; and thinks new typographic thoughts in terms of ephemeral gray wood pulp and a slap-dash process. The paper is gray and the printing is gray. Therefore he composes in grays. The effect is sludgy—as though printed with apple-butter on a hay press. He is not dismayed. He shapes his devices along lines that make no demand upon crisp blacks, sparkling whites and precise impression. When he uses pictures he has them drawn in outline, or in blobs. His artist chews the end of a penholder and draws with that. Or he coarsens the screen of his half-tone beyond the necessity of the occasion and gets virtue out of the texture. His types thicken and slide; they become the more "sketchy." The flimsy substance, the casual treatment in printing, the ephemeral life of the product—all these set the pitch—the designer designs accordingly.

Antique Finish

At first sight it would seem to be supererogation to do more than hint at the proper way to use "antique finish" papers. These are the Native Sons—the '49ers. They were there when printing was invented. The art started its life with such rough-surfaced papers, and continued with them until Mr. Baskerville thought of the trick of putting sheets under the flat-iron. But as a matter of fact, printing type on antique-surfaced paper seems to be something of a stumbling-block to the modern craft. The fine points of the time-honored process have been forgotten in learning (and learning very thoroughly) an entirely different trade—*viz.*, the trade of printing half-tones. Therefore, when the designer of advertising undertakes to work antique papers into his scheme he is obliged to delve out for himself the suitable standards and procedure—and often has to see that the things he has learned are put into practice. If he is a stickler for good workmanship, he will demand more impression than is compatible with the ideals of most pressmen; and an inking—and an ink—that will leave crisp, solid inlays with sharp edges printed from the *face* of the type, not from its shoulder.



Laid marks

When a given piece of work is specifically a type job, or type with line plates—when there are no half-tones to be used—when bulk does not matter—when a piece of printing does not need to be handled very much—the designer of advertising will specify antique finish. If he has a drop of printing ink in his blood, that will be his invariable rule. And he will be right; because in all those cases the type is the prime thing, and the paper that gives type the best chance to be read is the paper to use—and antique paper gives type the best chance.

Laid and Wove

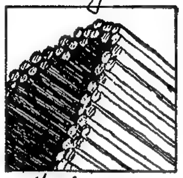
Antique papers occur as "laid" and "wove." These are textures communicated to the sheet by the wires of the "dandy-roll" on the machine (which also contributes the manufacturer's trade-mark). Wove paper has a uniform texture; laid paper shows the marks of the wires, about an inch apart in one direction (chain), and crossing these at a right angle another set of marks close together (wires).

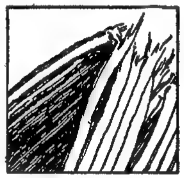
Grain

Mention of wire marks and dandy-roll calls up the subject of "grain." It happens that while paper is being made on the machine the fibers of cellulose have a tendency to settle pointed more or less along the length of the ribbon of paper and not across it. As a result a considerable portion of the fibers in the felted paper lie parallel, all pointed in one direction, as though they had been combed. When such a sheet becomes damp the fibers swell, they increase in diameter but not in length. And since a large number of the fibers lie side

by side like logs in a raft, the web expands more in one direction than it does in the other. In other words, when a sheet of machine-made paper becomes damp it increases in size along one dimension, but not along the other. It is important to know which way it is going to swell. If a sewed and bound book is made up with the grain running the right way—that is, from top of page to bottom—the paper is free to swell sideways, and no harm is done if it gets damp. But if the grain runs across the page and the paper starts to swell, trouble is bound to result. The sheet cannot move up and down because it is held fast by the stitching—all the pages arch and buckle between the stitches; the result is anything but neat!

Folding

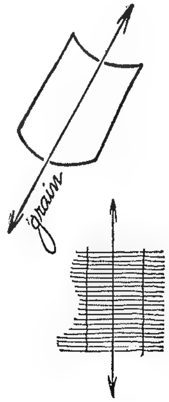

with the grain


across the grain

Grain has a bearing upon *folding* paper. A sheet of paper folds comfortably on a line parallel with the grain. When a sheet is folded across the grain the fibers have to be broken in the process and the folded edge is ragged. This is a more or less microscopic detail (although heavy paper shows the effect), but it may be important on occasion.

Test for grain

The way the grain runs in a given lot of paper is usually stated by the manufacturer; but if he doesn't tell, there is an easy way to find out, in the case of book papers at least. Cut off a small slip (and mark which way you cut it!), moisten one side; the slip starts to roll up into a cylinder; the grain runs parallel with the axis of the cylinder. The grain of laid (machine-made) paper is parallel with the "chain" marks—the wide-spaced marks. The question of grain is important in the case of booklets that are to be sewed, or held by closely spaced wire stitching; not so important in other cases.



Printing paper started its career as "antique." But during the past century and a half it has undergone remarkable changes—changes tending always toward a smoother surface. Changes in the style of type letters have had something to do with stimulating this smoothing-out process, but by far the greatest driving force has been the modification of the surfaces of plates for printing *pictures*. These surfaces have been cut into ever finer and finer reticulations, and the paper-makers have been driven, perforce, to press and polish and overlay their fabric with extraneous substances, so that the microscopic projections of the picture plates will print.

English Finish

"English Finish" is the first step away from the rough antiques. E. F. is still really an antique paper, though a most polite one. Your full-blooded antique has something semi-civilized—barbaric—in its fibres. English Finish (we may say) is an antique that has had its rough fur smoothed down by the soothing influences of the Victorian Age—and a little filling added to keep the fur in place once it is smoothed. On the surface of E. F. the designer is able to contrive delicate effects with line plates and tints, and a suaver and generally more urbane and sophisticated treatment of type. A point to be noted about E. F. is that it is comfortable to the fingers.

M. F.

Then another step toward a smoother surface is accomplished. Gum or resin is added to the pulp, and the web is run between metal polishing cylinders on the machine (calender rolls—calender, corruption of cylinder) and Machine Finish, M. F., emerges.

S. & SC.

A later encounter with another set of *heated* calender-rolls yields Sized and Super-calendered, S. & SC.

Antique finish and English finish are essentially *type* surfaces. M. F. and S. & SC. are general utility *half-tone* papers—one might almost say, Illustrated Magazine papers; because even in the severely literary periodicals on antique the part of the magazine that

really matters is printed on M. F. or S. & SC. or plate —because of the pictures. It is interesting to note how the *picture*, exclusively, has set the pace in all this career after smoother surfaces. Type has had to trail along as best it could.

Coated

But the hunt is not yet ended, the fox is not yet down. These paper surfaces (designated by symbols that look like academic degrees, M. F., S. & SC.), not yet keeping pace with the diminishing points of the plates, other means have to be contrived. Clay is spread upon the web or mixed with the pulp and ironed out to a glaze; coated papers result. But here the chase has overrun itself. The surface has become too shiny—so the coated and polished sheet is subjected to another process that takes off some of the shine without lessening the paper's receptivity to fine half-tones—and one has "dull-finish coated." There are hints of a still further closing of the pores, by means of a film of celluloid.

Dull-finish Coated

Typography and coated papers

The designer's manipulation of all these specifically *picture* half-tone papers calls for an entire readjustment of his typographic standards and traditions. All of the existing type faces have been designed for use on rougher surfaces—even the "modern" faces—Baskerville, Didot, Bodoni, Scotch. If the case demands "period" (a period that falls within the "modern" type limits), one may crib from Baskerville or Bodoni or one of those masters who polished their pages. But the whole matter of cribbing is a confession that we do not know how to design printing for modern uses. Present-day affairs cannot be clothed in the garments of 1810 unless the exhibitor is willing to assume a self-conscious and artificial pose. On half-tone papers the designer of advertising (without type at his disposal fitted to the kind of paper he needs to use) is confronted by the problem of inventing an entirely new typographic style.

What that new style will be—or should be—is not yet manifest. As yet, from the point of view of design in the broad sense, the millions of reams of printed half-tone papers that issue from the modern presses do not convey any hint of what a suitable and adequate and *modern* style of typography will be. This sweeping statement is not to be interpreted as a querulous brief issuing from a superannuated counselor against new processes. It means just what it says. The problem of assembling type and pictures on half-tone papers has not yet begun to be solved. The solution waits, first, for new styles of type letters; and after that for a sharp break with the traditions of the past.

Hand-made

Hand-made paper is a material—and a subject—that leads straight into a region of debate. If newsprint is at the bottom of the scale of paper qualities, what is at the top? One person will pick the shiniest "art coated" for this exalted position; another will choose an all-linen bond; a third will say, "hand-made." If the designer of advertising is called upon to produce a piece of printing in the grandest possible style, what kind of paper will he choose? Undoubtedly he can accomplish one kind of "grand manner" by using hand-made paper.

The superiority of hand-made paper over machine-made paper is a question to be debated in the thin, high atmosphere of Fine Art. It raises another larger question: Is an article made by hand better than an article made by a machine? There is no doubt but that "hand-made" has been set up as a fetish and fumed with strange incenses by various ultra-esthetic tribes of worshipers. Their peculiar and exotic ritual has thrown a tinge of disrepute over the word. But notwithstanding, there are some of us who find a value in the variety that is bound to occur in articles made by hand. That same variety—the difference between sheet and sheet (which drives the pressman mad)—is the thing that gives hand-made paper its artistic value. But the essence is dissipated unless the paper is skillfully handled by the printer. Unless he is skillful the result will be many times worse than the same form printed on machined paper. There is no virtue in hand-made *merely as hand-made*, any more than there is virtue in antique furniture merely because it is antique. The hand-made paper has to be good hand-made paper. If it is good, then you have a substance that you will use for its own sake—as you would use silk in place of cotton or mahogany in place of cottonwood—because it is a substance of fine quality, not because it seems to reflect "ye oldene tymme."

Deckle edge

One feature of hand-made paper (a feature that is usually trimmed off of machined paper) has collected about itself something in the nature of a cult—namely, the "deckle edge." The cult reaches its apogee in hand-made paper envelopes with a deckle edge on the flaps! Most of us use nature's own method for moistening the gum on envelope flaps—and behold how our tongues are lacerated! This deckle-edge flap is worth mentioning as an example of how *not* to use paper as part of the apparatus of advertising. One assumes that the function of a deckle edge is to prove that the paper is hand-made and therefore aristocratic; but that function is obsolescent, because the manufacturers now slyly forget to trim the deckle edge off their machine-made papers!

The papers that have so far been discussed are strictly *printing* papers. There is another category to be considered: the family that started as *writing-papers*. This list includes Linens, Bonds and Ledgers.

"Linen" writing

The original writing-papers were book papers (handmade, of course) thrown on smaller and finer-screened molds and sized more or less so that their surfaces would support fluid writing-inks. That is to say, they were "antiques." From the fact that some of their modern descendants are called "linens" one assumes that they were made of linen rags. The modern "linen writing" papers are the only papers of the writing group that really lend themselves to letterpress (relief) printing. Note that *linen* does not mean an impressed fabric finish, but refers to a class. For the purposes of typewritten business correspondence the linens are not so generally impressive as the bond papers, for reasons to be noted; but they are valuable for the projection of an air of distinction when such an air is desirable.

Bond

The various bond papers are the "writing"-papers of modern business. They are wove papers heavily sized. Virtue in these papers (from the consumer point of view) consists in "rattle." They please most when the sound that they make when handled is exactly like the snap of a piece of new paper currency fresh from the mint. This is an entirely proper standard of judgment. A letter-head of a business firm on bond paper is expected to convey an impression to the recipient—and what impression would you have other than that of *funds?*

This property that bond paper has of suggesting money and gilt-edged securities makes it one of the two papers *ne plus ultra* for most people. (The other is "art coated.") When a firm wants to issue a particularly special booklet in the grandest possible style it is likely to specify bond. In spite of the humane efforts of the ink-makers to meet the crisis, the printed result is bound to be—something less than grand style. (But the

firm may have been right, after all—may have properly envisaged the units of its "list"—who know nothing about paper and printing, but do know the feel of money. Thus are the standards of a craft set at naught.)

Printing processes for Bond

The printing processes that work best on bond papers are the "damp" processes such as copper-plate engraving or photogravure—or die-stamping, or lithography. These processes yield a crisp, workman-like result that enhances the paper-money resemblance (paper money being printed from intaglio plates). Manufacturers try to make bond papers that can be printed by relief processes, but usually they have to sacrifice the paper-money rattle to do it.

What linens and bond papers are made of is a question that hangs entirely on the concern for how long they need to last. The highest grades are still made from linen rags, one assumes—such as the paper on which the currency is printed. The all-(cotton) rag papers will endure if they are not harassed by chemicals. At the other end of the scale is wood pulp, which will *not* endure—but does it need to?

•

TYPE

What type to use?

WHAT type does the architect of advertising elect to use, and why? That question is the acolyte's invariable first prayer for enlightenment—phrased always in one of the various voices of despair—what type shall I use? The gods refuse an answer. They refuse (sacrilege though it be to say it) because they do not know.

The gods of advertising turn their backs. Can we—left to our own resources—get any hints from the specimen-books?—from the treatises on type?—from schools that teach printing?—from the lectures of experts? We cannot.

We have left, then, only one course to pursue—to learn from the advertisements themselves.

Look through the advertising sections of a prosperous magazine on the hunt for pointers about the kinds of types that advertisers like. Three facts emerge: (1) They like bold-face. (2) They have a great deal to say in extremely small-sized type. (3) They are much subject to the influence of *fashion* in type.

1. The users of advertising (or their advisers) are sure that a loud noise carries conviction. Is there any general rule for choosing type to be deduced from that fact? Since so much bold-face is used it must be that bold-face can be depended on to put the thing across.

The occasion determines the type

Bold-face is a habit—a habit inherited from newspaper practice, where a loud noise may be essential. Under quieter conditions—magazine pages, direct mail, etc.—it may be a *bad* habit. Because the loudest noise is not always the most intelligible. Outside of newspapers, emphasis may perhaps be better achieved by using various sizes of a given face rather than by blackness. A useful deduction, then: You cannot pick a particular style of type and make a pet of it and use it on all occasions—a type has to be chosen with reference to the place where it will be seen.

Performance in small sizes

2. The users of "space" have a habit of packing into their allotted rectangles more matter than the space can comfortably hold. Therefore much of the matter will have to be set very small. From which we deduce that one makes an effort to choose a type face whose small sizes have character and are easily read. Query: What faces are good in 6 point, 8 point?

Novelty

3. Fashion sways the world of type as well as the world of clothes. What faces are new, smart, in vogue, and at the same time good? And—being new and smart—are they used so much by so many people that they are in danger of becoming commonplace, so that advertisements set in them run the risk of looking like all other advertisements? Fatal contingency.

Here, then, is a rough method for attacking the problem of what types to use in advertising: See what types are being used, and start asking questions about *why* they were used and how well they perform their function.

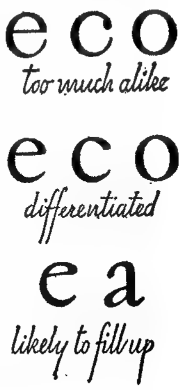
Four prime requisites

There are four prime qualities that a printing designer demands in type. In the order of their importance they are (1) legibility, (2) vigor, (3) newness, (4) grace.

At the present state of affairs there is no scientific answer to the question, What kind of type is most legible? Such reports as come out of the laboratories are not helpful. There is, however, a rough and ready rule for getting some light on this matter—the assumption, namely, that types that have continued in use for a long term of years are legible. By this test you get a number that you can be sure of—Scotch modern, for example, and the various modifications of the Caslon family. Certain nineteenth-century designs, such as Cheltenham, Bookman, and Century, are almost venerable enough to be safe.

Legibility

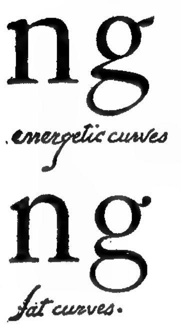
But the advertiser wants *newness* in his types; he wants to use the latest thing; he cannot afford to wait half a century to find out if a type is legible. Are there any signs by which you can tell if a new face is likely to be legible or not? There are a few. For a start, scratch off the list any *eccentric* designs—any face that departs in a startling way from the old safe-and-sane letter shapes. A new design must keep its novelty within bounds; it must not be *too* novel. A type that stops you in the middle of a sentence and asks you to admire its smartness is a bad type. If the characters of a face distinguish themselves one from another, the face is apt to be legible. This is true in spite of the fact



that the two kinds of type that people read most—newspaper types and typewriter types—are the worst possible examples of confused characters. What you want is a face whose "e" is always clearly an "e"—quite impossible to be confused with a "c" or an "o."

Effect of fashion

Fashions in color or weight of print run in cycles, as do fashions in clothes. One period likes its print black and thick, another gray and slight. The present time seems to have settled into a liking for a texture of type that is rather gray and thin. People are used to it; therefore they can read it comfortably. That is the reason why bold-face is not always the safest thing to use for long passages. On the other hand, the fact that most printing *is* gray gives one the chance to shock people and make them sit up and take notice by using occasional bits of black type such as "Cooper Black."



Vigor

When the advertiser asks for a *vigorous* type he usually means bold-face. But vigor depends more upon the shapes of the characters than upon the amount of ink they will deposit. The vigorous quality comes from the shapes of the curved letters, a, b, c, e, g, h, m, n, s, etc. There are soft, fat, lazy curves; and there are energetic, snappy curves.

Novelty

The quality of *novelty* has been touched upon. Pick types for their freshness and novelty—but have an eye out for the newness that is too, too new, and for that moment in the career of a new design when it is new no longer!

Grace

Does a consideration for *grace* in type letters—for good *esthetic* design of the characters themselves—have much bearing upon the question of types for advertising? In the long run, from the pragmatic point of view, not very much. Printing is merely print to the person who reads it—and that is the way it ought to be. A type that a reader notices is likely to be a type that you should not have used. He must be as unconscious of type letters as *things* as he is unaware of the ticking of the clock on the mantel-piece.

What is good design in type?

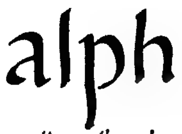
But, it will be argued, the *tone* of an advertisement matters; and the tone will depend, in some measure, upon the grace of the type used. That is true. However unconscious of the type the reader may be, there is something communicated to him by the esthetic quality of the page he peruses—a vague something. And the advertiser cannot afford to overlook anything that may help to exert an influence. So he is obliged to look into this matter of the esthetic design of letter forms. How is he to assess and evaluate a type face in terms of its esthetic design? Why do the pace-makers in the art of printing rave over a specific face of type? What do they see in it? Why is it so superlatively pleasant to their eyes?

Practical suitability

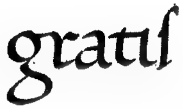
Good design is always practical design. And what they see in a good type design is, partly, its excellent practical fitness to perform its work. It has a "heft" and balance in all of its parts just right for its size, as any good tool has. Your good chair has all of its parts made nicely to the right size to do exactly the work that the chair has to do—neither clumsy and thick, nor "skinny" and weak—no waste of material and no lack of strength. And, beyond that, the chair may have been made by a man who worked out in it his sense of fine shapes and curves and proportions—it may be, actually, a work of art. The same thing holds for shapes of letters. And your chair, or your letter (if a true artist made it) will have, besides its good looks, a suitability to the *n*th degree to be sat in, or stamped on paper and read.

Why fine types are fine

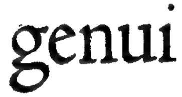
That explains, in a way, why the experts rave over the fine shapes of letters; but it fails to explain wherein the shapes are fine. If you seek to go further with the inquiry, theories will be your only answer. Here is a theory that the proponent thinks may have sense in it:



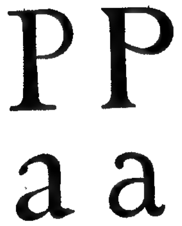
written with reed pen



XV Century bookwriting



XV Century type



mongrels
thoroughbreds

Fine type letters were, in the first place, copies of fine written letters. Fine written letters were fine because they were produced *in the most direct and simple way* by a tool in the hands of a person expert in its use—by a person, moreover, who was an artist (*i.e.*, a person equipped to make sound judgments about lines, curves, proportions, etc.). The artist of that moment when printing was invented who furnished the fine written patterns for type was (luckily for printing) working at the top notch of a fine tradition of calligraphy. He was making sound judgments about lines and curves and proportions of letters. He had resurrected an ancient distinguished style of writing and had added to it the quality of his own fine taste. His letters flowed from his pen easily and simply, without any tricks or affectations or extraneous embellishments. He was simple enough and artist enough to let the implement itself (and his facile hand) shape the product. The fine qualities of this artist's letter-forms were carried over into the metal types and sealed up there, like butterflies in amber.

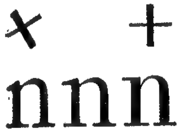
It is argued, however, that the ascription of beauty to type letters by this route (*i.e.*, *via* the standards of calligraphy) is false logic. If the natural and simple and tastefully controlled use of an implement produces a fine result, why not start with the process of founding type instead of with the process of writing with a pen? Why not cut punches and strike matrices and cast type metal simply and naturally and tastefully, and make types that reflect a suitable artistic use of the process of typefounding? I think that the argument is esthetically sound.

No standard of quality

There is no common opinion about the legibility or grace or vigor of various type faces that can be quoted as authority. One man's opinion is as good as another's. Each commentator has his own pet designs and his own reasons for thinking them good. Some kind of comment on the various type faces in general use is desirable in this section merely for the purpose of bringing the argument to a focus on actual examples. The comment that follows has no more weight than this: it is what a given person thinks about the type faces that are at the service of advertisers in this country.

Old Style and modern

Let us begin by recalling the fact that the specialist is in the habit of dividing type faces into two broad classes—"old style," and "modern." The change from old style to modern took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century, so that the modernity of the "modern" faces is not so conspicuous as their name might lead one to think. But a change in fashion really did take place, and there are structural differences that make the classification reasonable. Some acquaintance with these structural differences is desirable if you are to have peace in the type family. For, while members of one group are able to interchange freely and peaceably among themselves, if you try to put them both into the same design a race riot is apt to result.



old style
transitional
modern

The characteristic feature of a modern letter is its perpendicularity; the main elements are either perpendicular to the base line or parallel with it. Whereas in an old style type there are slanting features that give it its character.

Between these two groups there are many faces that Updike in his *Printing Types* calls transitional; that is to say, their progenitors were old style faces beginning to be modern, or modern faces with some lingering memories of old style. There are, beside, many faces that never had any grandfathers to remember at all—plain mongrel.

Making an estimate

How to find out which ones of the vast array of type faces are useful is a problem. A laboratory formula that would reduce their virtues and vices to numerical values would be a help, but, so far, that solution of the problem has eluded investigators. There are too many "variables": What size letter? How robust a letter, or how meager? Where is it to appear? Who reads it? How old is the reader?—how lately have his eyes been fitted with spectacles? Etc., etc.

One way to get opinions stated about type faces is to cast them up in a kind of table. The appended tabulation is one person's private estimate. What you think, or what anyone thinks is important . . . and inconclusive. The grading of the subjoined table runs from 0 to 10, with 10 standing for reasonable human perfection.

BOOK FACES, Normal Weight

For body matter paragraph blocks, etc. DISPLAY in larger sizes.

L=Legibility. *D*=Quality of letter design. *E*=Eye shock

	L	*D*	*E*		*L*	*D*	*E*
Baskerville	8	8	0	Estienne	9	9	0
Bell	7	5	0	Fairfield	9	9	0
Bembo	8	10	0	Fournier	8	8	0
Bodoni	8	7	0	Garamond	7	9	0
Bodoni Book	8	7	0	Goudy Modern	8	9	0
Bookman	6	4	0	Granjon	9	10	0
Bulmer	8	10	0	Janson	9	10	0
Caledonia	9	10	0	Kennerley	7	9	0
Caslon	8	9	0	Lutetia	8	9	0
Centaur	8	10	0	Old Style No. 7	7	2	0
Century	8	6	0	Plantin	7	8	0
Cheltenham	7	6	0	Poliphilus	8	10	0
Cloister	8	9	0	Scotch	8	7	0
Deepdene	7	9	0	Times Roman	8	8	0
Electra	7	9	0	Walbaum	8	8	0

DISPLAY or PUBLICITY FACES

For headings, catch lines and other emphatic statements

L=Legibility. *D*=Quality of letter design. *E*=Eye shock

	L	*D*	*E*		*L*	*D*	*E*
Bernhard Cursive Bold	6	8	8	Lydian	7	9	5
Beton	7	4	8	Lydian Cursive	4	8	7
Bodoni Bold	8	7	3	Mandate	5	7	10
Broadway (caps)	2	1	10	Mayfair	5	6	4
Cairo Medium	5	6	5	Mayfair Cursive	9	9	8
Cartoon Bold (caps)	9	9	10	Memphis Medium	5	6	5
Caslon Bold	8	8	2	Metro Medium	7	8	5
Cheltenham Bold	7	7	3	Metropolis Bold	3	4	10
Civilite	4	8	3	Mondial	2	0	6
Cooper Black	5	7	9	Neuland (caps)	5	8	10
Coronet	8	8	7	Novel Gothic	3	5	10
Corvinus Medium	4	4	8	Nubian	3	3	10
Delphian (caps)	8	9	8	Orplid	5	5	7
Eden Bold	3	5	8	Piranesi Bold	3	3	6
Egmont Bold	7	8	5	Phenix	2	5	8
Eve Bold	5	5	1	Radiant	7	6	9
Fournier (italic caps)	7	9	4	Signal	3	3	8
Franklin Gothic	5	5	7	Stellar Bold	7	8	10
Futura Medium	4	6	5	Stencil (caps)	6	8	8
Garamond Bold	9	9	5	Stymie Medium	4	3	5
Gill Sans-Serif	8	9	4	Sylvan (caps)	7	8	2
Girder	5	4	8	Tempo Bold	4	6	8
Goudy Bold	9	9	5	Tempo Inline	8	8	8
Graphic Bold	3	4	8	Trafton Script	5	8	7
Houser Script	3	3	10	20th Century Medium	4	6	5
Huxley Vertical Bold				Ultra Bodoni	3	6	10
(caps)	2	4	8	Ultra-Bodoni Bold	1	0	10
Kabel Bold	5	5	8	Umbra (caps)	3	6	10
Karnak	5	6	5	Weiss (caps), Series I	6	8	2
Kaufmann Script	4	5	9	Weiss (caps), Series II	7	8	2
Legend	4	8	10	Weiss (caps), Series III	5	8	8
Lucian	6	6	4	Weiss Roman	8	8	3

The tabulation by-passes a number of considerations: such, e.g., as that many faces are expanded with "bold" and "condensed" relatives, which make new faces, really; that various founder's versions of a given face differ one from another; that a given face varies in quality through its sizes. The list does not claim to be complete.

LETTERING

Papers and types are tools supplied to the designer of advertising ready made. He picks what he wants from the stock on the retailers' shelves. But the next pieces of apparatus, drawn lettering and ornaments, are made to his order. How these latter affairs turn out is more or less "up to" the advertising architect; whereas in the case of paper and type he may reasonably claim that his responsibility is less because he is obliged to use what he is able to get.

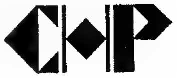
Drawn for the job

The expression "hand lettering" is used to designate lettering drawn by a designer for the specific job. The virtues to be looked for in hand lettering are, generally, the virtues to be looked for in type. When this kind of lettering is used in combination with type there are two ways to regard it. One way is to say that, since the reader has to pass back and forth from the type to the lettered lines, and *vice versa*, the drawn-to-order lettering should follow as closely as possible the style and details of the accompanying type. The other way is to say that since the lettering is *not* type it should be quite different from type and not look like it at all. The first way provides *unity* in a given advertisement and, usually, better design. The second way furnishes more liveliness.

Taking liberties

Drawn lettering is not subject to the rigidities that restrain type. It can move about more or less as it pleases. But this freedom to maneuver may turn out

to be a temptation to stray in dangerous ways unless the draughtsman (or the layout man looking over his shoulder) has due regard for legibility and the other calligraphic virtues. When there is no type present to set a rigid style (on a package wrapper or a label, for example), when all the text is hand lettered, the draughtsman is free (within the bounds of legibility) to take what liberties he likes with the shapes of the characters. The excellence, or otherwise, of his product will then depend upon his taste and upon his knowledge of the anatomy of letter forms. It happens luckily in lettering that designs in the best taste, artistically speaking, are usually the most legible.



odd but within bounds

Trade-marks, signatures

There is one kind of drawn lettering that is *not* subject to the advertising designer's behest—trade-marks, firm signatures, etc. These affairs are usually so badly designed that they act as handicaps upon the designer's skill. He has to take them with his eyes shut, so to speak, and work them into his scheme in such fashion as will do the least harm. By rights, of course, such matters as trade-marks and signatures ought to be the high spots in his composition—bits of "eye attraction" to give the final satisfying touch to his scheme—but the gods rule otherwise. Sometimes the indigestible "bugs" can be worked over into some more palatable shape, but not often.

ORNAMENT

Why decorate?

How does ornament serve advertising? Why do proprietors of valuable space give up perfectly good money-making areas to be used as gardens for growing intertwining vines of extraordinary varieties and various kinds of wiggles?

Theoretically the motive that inspires the use of decorative material is the desire to "dress up" the advertisement and make it look handsome. Actually the impulsion to "decorate" is, I think, imitative. Jones has ornamental flourishes in his advertisement, therefore Smith must have them, too.

Limitations of ornament

As a matter of fact, most of the so-called decoration used in advertising is a kind of weed—takes up valuable room and yields neither fruit nor flower. Starting with a rough-and-ready rule (to be qualified later), one may say: Never use ornament in advertising—have the good looks of the design depend upon a tasteful use of the active working parts of the design, the type matter, and the details that actually get the argument forward. The austerity of the rule may then be softened by saying: Do not use ornament unless you are absolutely sure that its use will add to the good looks of the design. And then, if you are sure that it is indispensable, use the ornament pure—use it for its own sake alone, to add richness and liveliness to the affair—not to get practical work done. It is unwise to wreathe carburetors and peppermint lozenges into an area of decoration; they are not at home there and their uncouth behavior may add a touch of burlesque to an affair that was probably meant to be perfectly serious.

Dilemma

It must be admitted that the advertising designer is badly off when he is confronted by the need to use decorative material. He is about as comfortable in his judgments as a novice in a drug store forced to fill critical prescriptions from the bottles with the funny names. Unless he is trained in this specialized art, how is he to tell good from bad? Some of the material offered him as 100 per cent pure is exceedingly deleterious—calculated to complicate and befog and obscure the most pellucid narrative.

A rough test of quality

If the advertising designer is inexpert in the decorative art there is only one rule that can be quoted to guide him. Ornamental material that is inferior shows

its inferiority quite plainly in one respect—it is stale. It is made up out of old themes that were once fresh and sprightly enough, but that have been worked over and over so many times by so many generations of men that they are now dingy and threadbare. Let him be suspicious of the signs of age. Old themes are fine enough if you know how to pick and use them—but, nevertheless, let him look out for fox marks and mold and the stains and abrasions of time! Present-day design that consciously apes the antique is inferior design.

But even when ornament is bright and fresh and new there are many ways in which the inexpert may go wrong. . . . I think that the cogency of the rule, Never use . . . etc., will present itself to him in a convincing light. There is *incoherent* ornament to be avoided—meaningless dabs and blobs that have their highest expression in the lines used to frame pictures in the newspapers—babblings of idiocy. There is *awkwardness* to be avoided—lines that perform with the grace of a camel. There are too many things to be avoided. It is a difficult subject!

PICTURES

Layout and pictures

When one comes to the subject of pictures used in advertising, the horizon retreats so rapidly and the field of view expands into such remote perspectives that the commentator is dazed!

Up to this point the layout man has been represented as having a free hand in the selection of his elements, and full authority to shape them to his ends. But here he must surrender the bâton. The quality and content of pictures are things beyond his control. They come to him ready made. Whether or not pictures shall be used; whether they shall be line, tone, or color; how many shall appear in a given space—these questions are usually settled by the powers higher up. Strictly speaking, there are only two points about pictures that fall within the limits of the designer's authority—what their size shall be; and where they shall be placed in the field of the design. But pictures play such an important part in transmitting the advertising message that the designer cannot afford to shelter himself behind a strict interpretation of his responsibility and let it go at that. He is forced by mere mass of material to get together a certain fund of judgments about pictures.

The picture and its job

Here are excerpts from such a file: Advertising pictures need to do actual advertising work. Mere beauty for beauty's sake has to be dismissed as not sufficiently pertinent. Space is too valuable to be used merely as a picture gallery. There is another reason besides that may be adduced for keeping the picture strictly to its job. I have a notion that this American people is not "picture-minded." By that I mean that the art side of pictures does not mean much to the average person. We are "word-minded," rather. Until the art of a picture is explained *in words* by the omniscient art critic its message is not understood. There is only one kind of pictorial representation that we seem to be able to read easily and naturally, namely, the newspaper cartoon. A picture for advertising purposes needs to copy the method of the newspaper cartoon. It must tell a story graphically. Moreover, it must make sure that the story it undertakes to tell would not be told better in words.

Must be brisk

Advertising pictures need to be made so that they can be read on the run. The percipient can be expected to pause and ponder only in the case of pictures that explain construction, or texture, or other technical points. Obviously this point about clear and rapid statement applies with particular force to out-of-door advertising on billboards, and to window displays. It is a rare sight to see a group of automobilists dismounted from their machines gathered about a billboard deciphering its message.

The designer will advise, then (if he is consulted), that the pictures supplied him be something more than mere eye-catchers—that they be as pertinent to the argument as the copy itself. The eye-catching part of the job can then be left to his skill in putting the pictures in the right place—a subject to be discussed in the last part of this book.

Given the pictures, the means for getting them upon paper are extensive, as the list bears witness:

Wood engraving
Copper-plate engraving
Straight photoengraved line, from
  pen-and-ink
  brush
  crayon
Line with Ben Day
Line with flat color
Line with Ben Day color
Line with manipulated half-tone color
Flat color *per se* (in the manner of wood-block prints)
Ben Day color *per se*
Half-tone
Combined half-tone and line
Highlight half-tone
Half-tone with flat colors under
Two-color half-tone
Quadricolor half-tone
All these by offset process
Rotogravure
Rotogravure in color
Gelatine process
Lithography
Photogravure

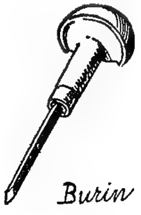
Harmony with type

Certain ones of these methods have a particular harmony with type printed on antique paper, namely, wood engraving, photoengraved line, flat color *per se*. Besides these there are offset, Ben Day, coarse-screen half-tone, rotogravure, lithography, gelatine process, photogravure, that are antique paper methods but not quite on such sympathetic terms with type as the foregoing three. The rest call for smooth coated paper, and are still farther away from the ancient type traditions.

Pictures, not copy, set the pace

The traditional typographer was always trying to make pictures come into some kind of harmony with his type page. But type takes a decidedly secondary place in the technique of advertising design when pictures are present. The center of gravity shifts from the old location where everything had to be contrived to give type the best chance, and takes up a new position where pictures set the step and call the tune. The paper, the method of printing, the style of the type, all have to conform to the inexorable demands of picture processes. Even the copy itself has been known to wait until the picture part of the presentation has taken definite shape.

It is obvious what obligation such a state of things lays upon the designer. He has to become conversant with the methods of engraving picture plates, and with the demands that those plates make upon paper and the process of printing. It is beyond the scope of this text to enter upon a discussion of these interdependent factors. That is an examination that will have to be pursued in the shop or in special technical treatises. Here there is room for only the scantiest comment upon the peculiarities of the various ways of printing pictures. The following catalog does not aspire to present new facts. It aims merely to run a line across the region of process engraving to guide the casual wayfarer. The informed reader will skip it. The student *a priori* will want to follow up lines of research for himself. The list may provide him with memoranda.


Burin

1. *Wood engraving*. The father of relief line methods. Blocks were cut at first on a plank with knives and gouges; later with a burin on the end grain of box-wood. "Relief" in contradistinction to "intaglio." Relief plates have ridges that stick up in relief, whose summits take the printing ink and stamp it onto paper. The valleys do not catch any ink and consequently leave

white spaces on the paper. "Line" may be defined thus: when the unaided eye can plainly see white paper between the ink lines, the process is *line;* when the printed points of ink are so small that the eye cannot see them as separate dots, the process is *tone*. Prints from wood engravings are in the greatest possible harmony with type. Sharp and clear cut. The method is mostly used now for machinery and catalog cuts. But capable of the highest degree of artistic excellence in the hands of an artist. Any kind of paper; preferably antique finish.

Line

2. *Copperplate engraving*. The oldest "intaglio" line process. Lines cut with a burin in a smooth copper plate. Cut by hand and printed by hand; ink spread on the plate and wiped off again; some ink stays in the engraved lines and is squeezed out on to damp paper in a machine like a clothes-wringer. Cannot be printed along with type (type being relief printing). Steel engraving is a similar process. Copperplate is used now only for social forms, visiting cards, etc. An artist's process. Brilliant sharp prints. Antique paper. The aristocrat of line processes *per se;* but few artist-engravers alive.

3. *Straight photoengraved line*. Plates in relief made by photochemical process on metal. Copy has to be in line exclusively, pen-and-ink drawings or other drawings in line. Cannot use drawing in tone, rubbed crayon drawings or water-colors. Line plates print on any kind of paper. Not quite so sharp as wood engravings because the valleys, having been eaten away with acid instead of being cut with a sharp tool, have microscopically ragged edges. Correct handling yields a facsimile of the original drawing. A process for *copying*, not a means for original expression like wood engraving or copperplate. Harmonious with type, particularly suitable for antique paper.

Ben Day

4. *Line with Ben Day Tone.* Relief, line. A line plate as in (3) with a stippled tone added. "Ben Day"—a process (invented by a person of that name) for putting little dots on a line plate wherever you want, thus making an even gray tone. The effect of a pen-and-ink drawing with a flat wash of water-color added in places. The tone looks mechanical because the small dots that make it are arranged in mechanical patterns. The dots make a tone but you can see paper between them, so we may call the process line. Coarse enough to print in a newspaper and used on rough-surfaced papers (not on smooth papers, where the effect can be got more delicately with half-tone).

5. *Line with flat color.* Relief, line. Line plate as in (3) with solid colors printed from flat plates. "Solid" means not broken up with stipples or dots, a flat, even surface of ink without shading or modulations. Each color requires a trip through the press. Any kind of paper; but, being a line process, particularly suitable for antique papers. Sympathetic with type.

6. *Line with Ben Day color.* Relief, line. By the use of Ben Day tones the colors can be given some degree of shading, and can be overlapped to produce secondary colors. Otherwise as in (5). The comment in (4) about Ben Day and paper surfaces applies here and in (9).

7. *Line with manipulated half-tone color.* Relief, line and tone. In this case the color plates are made by means of a half-tone screen instead of by Ben Day, to print on smooth papers. The result is more delicate because the half-tone dots are so fine that they cannot be seen as separate dots, but blend into an even tone. The color can be shaded or can be flat. Colors can be overlapped one on another to produce other colors, yellow over blue to make green, etc. S. & SC. or coated papers.

8. *Flat color per se.* Relief, line. Flat areas of solid color without the pen-and-ink outline, in the manner of wood-block or linoleum prints. Poster effects. Theatrical posters cut on pine planks are humble members of this family. Any kind of paper, but best on antique finish. Once through the press for each color. To a limited extent secondary colors by overlapping primaries.

9. *Ben Day color per se.* The Ben Day tones can be manipulated to produce effects in full color, after the manner of a quadricolor half-tone but of coarser texture, printable on antique papers.

Half-tone

10. *Half-tone.* The usual tonal process. A mechanical method for breaking up a tonal picture (*e.g.*, a photograph) into minute points on a metal plate. The microscopic points print dots on the paper. The dots are of various sizes, and are so small that the unaided eye cannot perceive them as dots, but sees them as a blended tone. The range of shading is from almost solid black to almost white; but the areas that appear to be white have a minute stipple of black dots over them. Of various degrees of coarseness, some coarse enough to print in a newspaper, but mostly on M. F., S. & SC. or coated papers. The degree of fineness is stated in "lines"; 80-line screen, 133-line, etc.; the higher the number of lines the finer the dots.

11. *Combined half-tone and line.* Relief, line and tone. "Combination plates"; part of the picture in tone, part in line—*e.g.*, a half-tone portrait with a pen-and-ink border.

12. *Highlight half-tone.* Relief, tone. A further treatment of the half-tone plate that etches out all the minute points of the white areas (the areas that are clear white in the drawing), and permits those areas to show as clear paper in the final print. Otherwise as in (10).

13. *Half-tone with flat color under.* The usual half-tone

print with flat areas of pale color under various parts, pink under the faces of a picture, say.

14. *Two-color half-tone.* Relief, tone. Two half-tone plates, made from a colored drawing; the first made the usual way, to print in black, say; the negative for the second made through a transparent "color filter" (colored liquid) that selects all the red in a drawing, or whatever color is wanted. Or two half-tones, each made through a color-filter, perhaps to print in red and green. The two plates printed one over the other.

15. *Quadricolor half-tone.* Relief, tone. Full-color copy of a picture painted in full color. Four plates made mechanically by the half-tone process, the colors selected with color-screens. To print in four colors progressively—yellow, blue, red, black. The half-tone dots are arranged so that they combine (optically) to produce all the colors of the original picture. Special coated paper. Four times through the press.

Offset 16. All these by *offset process.* Printed first on a rubber blanket and then from the blanket on paper. The method permits one to print fine-screen half-tones on rough paper.

Intaglio 17. *Rotogravure.* Intaglio. A modification of photogravure that can be printed rapidly on a machine instead of slowly by hand as in photogravure. Most of the pictorial advantages of photogravure, rich blacks, full tones. A fine half-tone screen used, but so fine as to be invisible. No pure whites; a film of ink over the whole area. Special paper. In newspaper practice the type is etched on the plates along with the pictures.

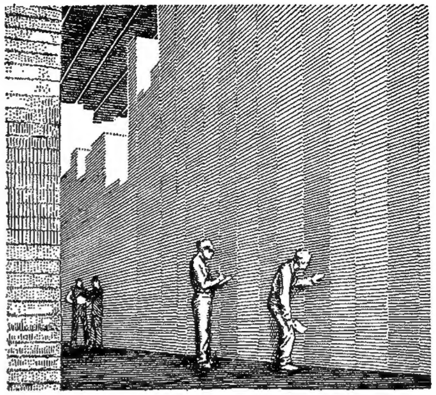
18. *Rotogravure in color.* "Roto" plates printed progressively in color as in quadricolor.

19. *Gelatine process.* A full-tone process (*i.e.*, a continuous film of ink; not a tone made up of microscopic dots as in half-tone). The plate prepared mechanically by photography.

20. *Lithography.* Planographic—*i.e.*, neither cut *in* nor cut *up*. Printed from flat metal or stone in a special press, not in combination with type. The stone prepared either by photographic copying or by hand. *Planographic*

21. *Photogravure.* Intaglio, full tone. The aristocrat of facsimile tonal processes. The plates made partly by photography and partly by hand. Printed by hand in a special press, not in combination with type. *Intaglio*

This section may conclude with a remark about ink. Ink has been left out of the list of apparatus. It might seem to be just as important a part of the kit as paper or type; but it is not, because it does not influence any choice or manipulation of materials so far as the layout man is concerned. The things that the advertising designer has to think about are the things that shape and influence his design. And, peculiarly enough, this vital intermediary between plates and paper does not shape or influence his design at all. *Ink*



Product

Having circumnavigated the workshop and glanced at the tools of the trade, the next logical step will be to make a list of the things that the layout man helps to produce. These things are so well known to everybody (they drift in on every mail, leer out of every journal, crowd in between our eyes and every rural prospect) that a bare list of their names projects them into the full light of the sun with every lineament plain.

A bare list is all that this section really needs to be, merely to call before the designer's eye images of these various forms. But I have embellished it a bit. It is my idea to have the section serve as a kind of intermission, an *entr'acte*, a pause for general conversation while the scenery is being set for the long last act. So I have scribbled comments on the margins—comments of an informal personal nature; not aiming to develop any startling facts, nor to plumb technical depths; merely gossip about the persons of the drama and the general state of things.

Newspaper advertisements. Can an advertisement on a newspaper page afford to be polite? Politeness in such a place is novel and unexpected enough in itself to be startling and conspicuous. But a newspaper advertisement has to fight for its life. The conventional way for a small newspaper advertisement to thrust itself upon the attention of the world is by the use of ink, plenty of black ink; the fact that it is a conventional way should give the astute designer pause. Newspaper advertising and billboard advertising are two forms of publicity that move at sixty miles an hour. There are certain handy sizes of newspaper space, two columns by 90 lines, three columns by 125 lines, four columns by 170 lines. A full page is an invitation to skip and pass on to the next page. The newspaper composing-room cannot be expected to provide "style." Style has to be imported from outside, in the form of electrotypes.

Periodical advertisements. Newspaper space is "plano-competitive" (new word); periodical space not so much so. Fractional-page advertisements in the proletarian magazines have to ward off competition, but the visual field is smaller. Eighth-pages, quarter-pages, half-pages in the aristocrats can manage to be reasonably polite —not so much call for snatching. A full-page advertisement in any magazine can afford to deport itself as though the world were inhabited by gentlemen. The world isn't, of course, so the privilege is waived.

Broadsides and folders. One assumes that the postal rate covers the cost of transportation. If this is not the case, then broadsides and folders account for a part of the annual deficit in the post office. Such ones as are distributed by hand cannot be included in this item, of course. But even these have a bearing upon the economic state of the nation: from year to year they increase the run-off of the rainfall.

Booklets are like the leaves of the trees—numberless. It would be a relief if they emulated foliage in another respect and were of infinite variety. I suppose one booklet *does* differ from another in glory; the features of any particular booklet are probably quite distinct and individual to its parents. But as they come to me they all might as well have been born in an incubator.

Illustrated letters, one assumes, ought to stay in place as letters, and not arrogate to themselves functions of folders and broadsides—however . . . . The theory is that the recipient thinks that he has got a letter, and is further surprised and delighted to find that his correspondent was thoughtful enough to include supplementary information on pages two and three. One wonders. Probably more surprise than delight.

Stuffers are the naïve little slips that snuggle in among the folds of business letters and drop out demurely. Unless they look pretty sharp they are likely to get lost in the rush to find out what's in the morning mail. When they arrive in company with bills they have to behave with almost superhuman tact. Bright colors. Gay, unexpected, surprising—but tactful, before everything else, tactful.

Calendars. I need a good legible calendar to hang in a place where it can be seen from all points and all the time—so I cut off the pad (which is so-so, not particularly good, but it will serve) and throw the decorative merchandising portion into the waste basket. It is strange that it never occurs to the donors of these calendars that a calendar, to serve any useful purpose at all, has to be displayed in a strategic position—a place of grand optical focus. I don't mind their merchandising comments; only, one can't quite go the tone in which these are usually made.

On 300 days in the year—or add 65 more if it is for home consumption—your beneficiary's eye will travel to this placard. Which would seem to suggest that considerable foresight ought to enter into the project of a calendar.

Blotters. Part of the desk equipment, not a handbill. The pleasure is all yours (who send it) if the useful rectangle of absorbent paper looks like a notice of a cattle sale. A humble form of advertising, but by no means to be slighted because it is humble. Here is a place to think the thing through to the consumer; picture it on his desk. It carries the firm's honorable name; it is a representative; it involves a question of courtesy. Will it blot?

Catalogs. Paper salesmen. Like the gentlemen of that honorable profession, they are forced, in these latter years, to progress to super-salesmanship. The old-fashioned, simple price-list will not serve any more. For plain but honest countenance, and habiliment neat and brushed but not particularly swank, you have to substitute something more in the Fifth Avenue way. . . . But does the customer insist on these blandishments as part of the transaction? Has the customer changed, too? Does he lean back farther, and refuse to sign until the aura takes on just the proper tint? May it be that this psychological super-salesmanship tends to change the "come-on" into a "hold-off"?

House organs. The pressure to be smart is too great. Boil the thing down to the quintessential reason for issuing a house organ, and let the residue solidify in the simplest possible typographic form. The result will startle you (in the midst of a ruck of smart house organs) by its conspicuous individuality and air of solid conviction.

Street-car cards. Uneasy affairs. They behave like nervous children, fidget and squirm and writhe. A rack full of these neurasthenic adolescents is really a horrible thing to look at. Why cannot some one of them get hep to the fact that it would be conspicuous if it just stood still?

Window cards. If it blocks the sidewalk it is a good display; if it induces the spectator to go in and buy, it is better. But, after all, the work that a window card is expected to do is the same work that a billboard does. Hold the vagrant glance for an instant, and in that instant drive home a phrase—a phrase that will rankle in the victim's mind until it engenders a bright new craving. A window card kills at eight feet—the same range as a street-car card.

Billboards. A hail from the roadside: "Hey! You! Soaplets!" It takes skill to make a noise like that melodious and alluring, but evidently they do it; consult the statistics. Mural decoration, at its best; at its worst—but we will not go into that. Placarding is a venerable art, older than paper. Archæology is indebted to it for such things, for example, as the trace of the line of Roman forts from the Rhine to the Danube. But even the more grandiloquent emperors were modest by the side of the modern craft; in acreage, at least.

Package designs. Merchandise and advertisement in one. Packages ought to be able to sell themselves, without outside help in the form of "space." The source of the ornamental detail on the outside of "package goods" is a profound mystery; no human brain could give birth to these singular contortions. Do the lithographers have machines to which they intrust such details? . . . But, no, machines trace mathematical, comprehensible rhythms and curves.

Letter-heads. Envoys; responsible envoys, their deportment critically observed, in the public eye all the time. In a special way advertisements of the firm's tone and standing. They work at a distance, too—if the impression they make is unfortunate it cannot be checked against countervening facts locally known, and corrected.

Labels. An excellent means for projecting the firm's individuality. If the firm has any. If it has none, the firm assumes that the commodity can be bought ready-made from an art service; singularly naïve assumption. Labels and letter-heads go on for a long time spreading an impression; evidently worth while to see that the impression is the one intended.

Firm signatures. Cryptograms, usually; script containing a meaning artfully concealed. A certain type of firm signature can be traced back to some complacently assured proprietor who wrote his name on a slant, with a flourish under, and said, "Aha!"—whereupon all neighboring proprietors within his field of influence wrote their names on a slant, with a flourish under, and said, "Aha!"

PART II